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Skyping for the Ill and Wounded at Landstuhl

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(From left to right) Ms. Leah Barber, station manager, American Red Cross Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Army Specialist Randle Marcus, and Lt. Cmdr. Lawrence Creamer, clinical flight coordinator LRMCM, connect to Skype. (Photo by Lt. Valerie Adams/ HIPPA released)

As members of a volunteer military, I feel as if we all have a strong sense of duty and dedication to others. We tend to give of ourselves which is demonstrated by our service and that we volunteer to help others in their time of need. We all would like to make situations better for others in our world, especially those that love us and our country enough to sacrifice of themselves for the freedom of others. Upon receiving orders to return to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), I contemplated of ways to make the lives of our ill and wounded better during their stay at LRMCM.

Approximately 3-4 months before my return to LRMCM, I had an idea of how to better the patients stay here. I had remembered how much it meant to me to be able to e-mail and

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Skype my family while I was away from them and our home for a year. I could only imagine how much it would mean to the sick and injured who are brought here to be able to do the same. It would not only be very meaningful to them, but their families as well.

I arrived here at LRMC in April of 2012 with Navy Expeditionary Medical Unit (NEMU) 13 and began to care for the patients/ensure they received the appropriate care as a clinical flight coordinator at the Deployed Warrior Medical Management Center (DWMMC). This duty is a bit different than the last time I was here as a member of NEMU 10 as a nurse providing direct patient care in the ward, primarily 10 Delta, and occasionally in the intensive care unit (ICU), but it is definitely taking care/organizing the care of our ill and wounded.

After a month of returning to LRMC, I began to contact different entities (e.g., [USO](#), [Chaplains Closet](#), [Red Cross](#)) to determine the feasibility of the idea and did have success when I spoke to one of the Red Cross representatives. She referred me to the Station Manager of the Red Cross at LRMC, Ms. Leah Barber, who informed me that they recently had a donation of 50 laptops to the Red Cross at LRMC. She mentioned that she was looking for a manner in which to best utilize the laptops and the idea of checking them out to the wards and ICU for the patients to use to contact their friends and families during the time that they and their families most needed them was a perfect fit.

After a few phone calls, e-mails, discussions with the ward and ICU department heads, and formulating a go-by for the ward check-out form for the staff and patients to complete, Ms. Leah Barber and I set out one morning with a cart full of laptops to check-out to the wards and ICU. With the blessing of the Department Heads for the ICU and wards, we checked approximately 4-5 of the laptops to each of the charge nurses. I confess, as we walked back with the remaining laptops to the Red Cross office, that the feeling of accomplishment and the knowledge of doing something good for the patients gave me a “feel good moment” that I will not soon forget.

I understand that some of the liaison officers had been giving/checking out laptops to the patients for some time, but now the patients have a ready resource to be able to communicate with their friends and families in a more meaningful way any time they want to...all they have to do is ask and check them out. As one of the nurses/techs informed me afterwards...all of the patients are able to use the laptops, regardless if they are active duty, reserve, retiree, contractor, or dependent.

My sincerest gratitude to the commander of LRMC- [Col. Barbara Holcomb](#), the Red Cross, and Department Heads of LRMC’s ICU and wards for providing this opportunity for those who have given more. Of course,as always, my gratitude to those who have given more of themselves and my hope that there will always be someone like them to answer the call when our country needs them.

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